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ABSTRACT

This is the final report of an annual Mississippi study, conducted for the first time in February of 1984, which provides baseline data for measuring improvement of school practices in key arenas. Its primary goals were to identify the extent to which children master one level of course work before being advanced to the next level, to determine what may be done to assure that progression from one level to another is properly sequenced, and to examine what steps are now being taken to assure that students are progressing satisfactorily toward mastery of the material under study. For the first part of the study, a mail questionnaire was carefully constructed to obtain specific data, and it was mailed to all public school principals. Topics in the questionnaire, which also constitute sections of the report, were as follows: (1) student learning objectives; (2) monitoring of teaching and learning; and (3) decisions about student promotion. In the second part of the study, a sample of mail questionnaire responses was verified by on-site visits to selected schools. Final sections of the report include a review of state corrective actions and a summarization of expectations of principals' behavior. (LMO)

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MASTERY LEARNING

MISSISSIPPI STATE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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RICHARD A. BOYD
STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION

DECEMBER 1984

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DECEMBER 1984

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STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Ralph Brewer, Director, Division of Instruction
Jack Gunn, Deputy Director, Division of Instruction
Alan W. Evans, Assistant Director, Division of Instruction
Nancy I. Brown, Instructional Consultant, Division of Instruction

CONSULTANTS: Policy Studies in Education
4745 Park Avenue South
New York, NY 10016

Henry M. Brickell, President
Regina H. Paul, Research Associate

FOREWORD

Identifying the extent to which children master one level of course work before being advanced to the next level is an important task in measuring improvement of effective school practices. Significant topics of concern for this study were student learning objectives, monitoring of teaching and learning, and decisions about student promotion. The overriding thrust is toward improvement of student achievement.

Sincere appreciation is expressed to all the professional educators who willingly cooperated in this initial study.

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INTRODUCTION

One of the stipulated studies in the Education Reform Act of 1982 to be conducted by the Mississippi State Department of Education was about "Mastery of Subject Matter and Learning Skills." In section 37-3-8(b) of the Mississippi Code, the following is stated:

> ...A study shall be conducted to determine the extent to which children master one level of course work before being advanced to the next level; what may be done to assure that progression from one level to another is properly sequenced; and what steps are now being taken to assure that students are progressing satisfactorily toward mastery of the material under study.

The law further states that this study shall be updated on an annual basis to determine the effectiveness of any corrective action taken.

This study was conducted for the first time in February of 1984. This is the final report of that study, which will provide baseline data against which the State Department of Education (called the State in this report) can measure improvement of school practices in the key arenas stated in section 37-3-8(b) of the Mississippi Code (quoted above).

This introduction to the report will both recap the development of the study and provide some guidelines for interpreting the results.

Planning the Study

During the spring of 1982, various committees were convened to analyze the Education Reform Act. These committees discussed and offered suggestions concerning the "Mastery of Subject Matter and Learning Skills" study. One committee was the Task Force for Educational Excellence in Mississippi, funded by the Phil Hardin Foundation. Other committee meetings were also held with appropriate State staff members in attendance.

In September, 1983, an intensive planning session for the study was held, involving staff from the State, from the Southwest Development Laboratory (Austin, Texas), and from Policy Studies in Education (an educational research and development organization in New York City). In this planning session, nine possible methodologies for conducting the study were explored in detail. After considering the pros and cons of each, two methodologies were combined, and a detailed time schedule for carrying each out was developed.

The study was constructed to address the following three questions, taken directly from section 37-3-8(b) of the Mississippi Code:

1. What is being done to assure that progression in subject matter from one level to another is properly sequenced?
2. What steps are now being taken to assure that students are progressing satisfactorily toward mastery of the material under study?
3. To what extent are children in Mississippi public schools mastering one level of course work before being advanced to the next level?

A mail questionnaire, to be used in the first part of the study, was carefully constructed to obtain specific data on each of those three topics. Those topics became divisions of the questionnaire and took on the shortened, popular names of:

1. Student learning objectives
2. Monitoring of teaching and learning
3. Decisions about student promotion

In the first part of the study, the questionnaire was to be mailed to every public school principal in Mississippi, completed and returned, processed, analyzed, and reported. In the second part of the study, a sample of mail questionnaire responses was to be verified by on-site visits to selected schools.

Principals were chosen as the data source because the State believes that the principal is the key to a good school and the State wanted to give that message clearly to all principals in Mississippi. Therefore, the study questionnaire focused to some extent on principals' own behavior with regard to the three topics listed and to some extent on principals' reporting school practices.

The State contracted with Policy Studies in Education (New York City) for the development of the study questionnaire.

Developing the Study Questionnaire

The study questionnaire was developed between early October, 1983, and mid-January, 1984. A series of planned meetings was conducted and produced a validated instrument.

The first few meetings were between the staffs of the State and Policy Studies in Education and were designed to establish a draft questionnaire. Once the draft questionnaire was developed, a pilot testing process began.

In the first pilot test, a group of selected administrators was brought to Jackson to work with the staffs of the State and Policy Studies in Education. The reactions of these administrators to each proposed questionnaire item were carefully recorded and discussed. Based upon these reactions, a second draft questionnaire was developed.

The second pilot test--almost like a field test--took place next. A group of principals, selected to be representative of principals throughout Mississippi, received the questionnaire in the mail, completed it, and came to Jackson to discuss their responses to each item. Their reactions to each item were carefully recorded and discussed, and the final questionnaire was developed based on their reactions.

During this time, the State's Data Processing Unit advised on several necessary format changes to enable quicker processing of the completed questionnaires.

The final questionnaire (typeset in camera-ready form) was delivered by Policy Studies in Education to the State by mid-January, 1984.

Using the Mail Questionnaire

Printing and distribution of the questionnaire to all public school principals in Mississippi was completed by the first week of February, 1984. Questionnaires were sent to approximately 900 principals of public accredited schools throughout Mississippi.

Virtually all questionnaires were completed and returned by principals, with more than 95 percent returned by the February 20, 1984, deadline. That is a remarkable response rate for any kind of survey, but especially for such a detailed survey conducted over such an extensive geographical area.

Between February 20 and March 20, the completed questionnaires were edited by State staff and given to the Data Processing Unit. Approximately 700 completed questionnaires were actually processed by the Data Processing Unit and subsequently analyzed. Those 700 principals, of course, had responsibilities scattered across all grades, 1 through 12.

The Data Processing Unit processed a significant amount of the data and transmitted it to the State staff working on the study and, eventually, to Policy Studies in Education staff, who prepared this report under contract to the State.

Conducting the On-Site Visitations

The second part of the study consisted of on-site visitations designed to verify the principals' responses in their completed, returned mail questionnaires.

Sixteen schools were selected for these verification visits, which were conducted by four two-member monitoring teams. These 16 schools were selected on the basis of such variables as type, size, economics, academics, and leadership. They were selected, of course, to be representative of public schools throughout Mississippi.

Prior to conducting the verification visits, a training session was held to establish specific methodologies for assessing the accuracy of principals' responses to each questionnaire item. Each trained team visited four of the 16 selected schools. Approximately one day was spent in each school. Each team worked with administrators, counselors, and teachers in each school.

The data collected by each team were compiled to produce a verified State composite. This composite showed that there was generally good agreement between what principals had said in writing in the mail questionnaire and what was actually happening in practice in their schools.

Establishing Guidelines for Interpreting this Report

Several guidelines were used in the interpretation of the principals' responses during the preparation of this report. These guidelines should be kept in mind by the reader of this report as well:

- Throughout the report, the State takes many positions regarding the data and offers its own expectations of acceptable performance by school principals--that is, it offers its expectations of what the data should be. The State will continue to use its own expectations of acceptable performance by principals to judge future performance of principals over the next several years as this study is replicated in whole or in part in the continuing assessment of "Mastery of Subject Matter and Learning Skills" throughout Mississippi.

- Inasmuch as this is the first study of "Mastery of Subject Matter and Learning Skills" to be conducted, the data collected here are primarily quantitative survey statistics as opposed to qualitative in-depth analyses. The State felt it was most important to get a solid quantitative overview of school practices in the three key arenas cited in section 37-3-8(b) first. The State will now look into each of these arenas further in a more qualitative manner, as described in various places throughout this report.

- Throughout the report, raw numbers and percents have been rounded off, in most cases, to the nearest 5 or 10 so that the reader will have an understanding of the magnitude of the numbers and percents without becoming overly concerned about small, insignificant differences in the data.

Some Final Notes

The two final sections of this report--following the presentation, analysis, and interpretation of the principals' actual responses--recap the various State corrective actions which the State will be taking in the near future (these corrective actions are mentioned throughout the report as the data leading up to each corrective action are presented) as well as summarize the State's expectations of principals' behavior (these expectations are also presented throughout the report, both implicitly and explicitly, as the principals' responses to various questionnaire items are presented).

TOPIC 1: STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Principals were asked to report on three areas within student learning objectives: (1) status of objectives; (2) relationships among objectives; and (3) uses of objectives. Here is their report.

Status of Objectives

Principals were asked to give the status (as of February 1, 1984) of the student learning objectives in every subject in every grade in their schools. (The State realizes that further work was yet to be done so that objectives would be in place by the fall of 1984 in accordance with Mississippi's program of Instructional Management.)

The State had hoped that most schools would be using either districtwide or schoolwide objectives in every subject and in every grade. The State's position is that management--not the individual teacher--should decide the objectives and manage their use. Whether a district prefers districtwide or schoolwide objectives, however, is left to the district to decide.

Inasmuch as the State is calling for districtwide or schoolwide objectives, here are the approximate numbers of principals who reported that districtwide or schoolwide objectives were being used by their teachers in the following subjects and grades:

Primary Grades (1-3)	
Reading	400
Mathematics	385
Other language arts	360
Social studies	350
Science	345
Health-physical education	305
Music	290
Art	190

Intermediate Grades (4-6)	
Reading	385
Mathematics	380
Other language arts	365
Social studies	360
Science	350
Health-physical education	305
Music	285
Art	180

Secondary Grades (7-8)	
Mathematics	250
Social studies	245
Science	240
Other language arts	235
Health-physical education	205
Music	155
Reading	120
Industrial arts	90
Home economics	85
Art	80
Computer education	15

Secondary Grades (9-12)	
Home economics	190
Mathematics	180
Science	180
Social studies	180
Other language arts	165
Business education	160
Vocational education	145
Health-physical education	140
Driver education	120
Music	120
Foreign languages	115
Art	65
Industrial arts	65
Computer education	40
Reading	30

The principals' reports are unsurprising and, in certain areas, encouraging. It is obvious that many school districts have, in fact, created districtwide or schoolwide objectives in the four basic academic subjects: reading and the other language arts, mathematics, social studies, and science. It is equally obvious that far fewer school districts have created districtwide or schoolwide objectives in the non-academic subjects of health-physical education, music, art, industrial arts, and home economics. Interestingly, there is somewhat less differentiation between academic and non-academic subjects having districtwide or schoolwide objectives in the high schools, especially for home economics, business education, and vocational education. Only a handful of districts can boast districtwide or schoolwide computer education objectives, possibly because only a handful of districts have computer education courses at all.

As can be seen from the table on the previous page, there is very little difference between districtwide or schoolwide objectives available in the primary grades and in the intermediate grades. There are some differences between districtwide or schoolwide objectives available in the early secondary grades (7-8) and the later secondary grades (9-12). For example, reading becomes far less important in grades 9 through 12, home economics becomes far more important in grades 9 through 12, and many subjects appear for the first time in grades 9 through 12.

As might be expected, grades 6 and 9 serve as "swing" grades and have statuses somewhat between the grades they follow and the grades they precede. The cannot be lumped perfectly with either group.

The vast majority of principals reported that they had districtwide as opposed to schoolwide objectives. Typically, in the four basic academic subjects, only about 45 principals reported that they had schoolwide objectives (that is, 45 of those reported in the table on the previous page.)

Percentagewise, about 80 percent of principals in the primary and intermediate grades reported that they had districtwide or schoolwide objectives in the four basic academic subjects. That percentage dropped just to about 70 percent by high school. In the non-academic subjects, such as art and music, the decline is similar. However, the State is pleased that the difference is not greater between the early and late grades. Often, experts will say it is far easier to get objectives written in the elementary schools. But, Mississippi is showing that objectives are being written in the secondary schools almost as frequently as in the elementary schools.

However, inasmuch as the numbers presented in the previous table do not reflect 100 percent of the principals in Mississippi declaring that they use districtwide or schoolwide objectives in every subject and in every grade--especially in the non-academic subjects (in which only about 55 percent of elementary principals and 40 percent of secondary principals reported that they had districtwide or schoolwide objectives)--the State will continue to push for the creation and serious implementation of districtwide or schoolwide objectives in every subject and in every grade during this 1984-85 school year, in accordance with Mississippi's program of Instructional Management. In addition, the State will continue to examine the quality of the districtwide and schoolwide objectives now available.

Relationships among Objectives

The principals were asked whether their objectives were linked from subject to subject so that the objectives being taught in one subject were enhanced by or integrated with the objectives being taught in another subject (e.g., art and music, science and mathematics, mathematics and vocational education, etc.) and whether their objectives were linked in a subject from grade to grade so that the objectives being taught in one grade in that subject were carefully articulated with the objectives in that subject which came before them and with the objectives in that subject which came after them. About 45 percent of the 700 principals who responded said that they had linked their objectives from subject to subject, and the vast majority said that they had linked their objectives from grade to grade. The remaining principals had not made these linkages among their objectives.

While the State is certain that more grade-to-grade than subject-to-subject linkages have been made, the State is equally certain that these percentages are far too high, given other evidence the State has. Perhaps these percentages represent, at best, some rudimentary linkages from grade to grade and subject to subject; however, the quality and extent of these linkages are certainly not yet up to the State's expectations.

The State believes that these linkages are imperative--especially the linkages from grade to grade--if the curriculum is to be orderly, efficient, and effective. While the State is pleased that some progress has been made toward these important linkages, it is not satisfied with either the number of principals who have made them or the quality and extent of the linkages. The State will continue to push hard for these relationships among objectives to be examined and made thoughtfully, carefully, and comprehensively for all subjects and grades during this 1984-85 school year. In addition, the State will examine subject-to-subject and grade-to-grade linkages to determine both their quality and the actual extent to which they have been made.

Uses of Objectives

Principals were asked to report how they use the student learning objectives in their schools. Of 10 possible uses which principals could have reported, the State believes that the two most important uses are the creation of districtwide or schoolwide tests or "banks" of test questions. For that reason, the number of principals who reported that their districts used districtwide or schoolwide objectives to create districtwide or schoolwide tests is reported for each subject by grade levels:

Primary Grades (1-3)

Mathematics	310
Reading	305
Other language arts	285
Science	255
Social studies	250
Health-physical education	130
Music	110
Art	85

Intermediate Grades (4-6)

Reading	305
Mathematics	300
Other language arts	285
Science	270
Social studies	265
Health-physical education	140
Music	110
Art	85

Secondary Grades (7-8)

Mathematics	190
Science	180
Other language arts	175
Social studies	175
Health-physical education	110
Music	85
Reading	80
Home economics	65
Industrial arts	65
Art	55
Computer education	15
Foreign languages	10

Secondary Grades (9-12)

Mathematics	135
Science	135
Social studies	135
Other language arts	130
Business education	120
Home economics	115
Vocational education	110
Foreign languages	85
Health-physical education	85
Driver education	75
Music	70
Art	40
Computer education	40
Industrial arts	40
Reading	20

These results are surprising and, in some cases, encouraging. The State is pleased that a relatively large number of principals report that they have access to districtwide or schoolwide tests, especially in the four basic academic subjects. However, the State believes these numbers are inflated, based on other evidence the State has. Perhaps these numbers reflect, at best, some rudimentary efforts toward developing districtwide or schoolwide tests. The numbers could not reflect the actual consistent use of such tests.

As with the districtwide and schoolwide objectives, there is not much difference between the status of districtwide and schoolwide tests in the primary and intermediate grades. In the secondary grades, reading becomes much less important as the students get older and home economics becomes far more important as the students get older. Again, there are also new subjects

added in grades 9 through 12: business education, vocational education, driver education, and foreign languages. As with the districtwide and schoolwide objectives, very few principals have access to districtwide and schoolwide computer education tests, probably because so few programs in computer education exist in Mississippi schools.

As with the objectives, the vast majority of principals reported that they had access to districtwide as opposed to schoolwide tests. Typically, in the four basic academic subjects, only about 65 principals reported that they had schoolwide tests (that is, 65 of those reported in the table on the previous page.)

Percentagewise, about 65 percent of principals in the primary and intermediate grades reported that they had access to districtwide or schoolwide tests. That percentage dropped to just about 55 percent by high school. In the non-academic subjects, such as art and music, there is no decline from the early through the later grades. As with the objectives, the State is pleased that the difference is not greater between the early and late grades, although both percentages are undoubtedly higher than would reflect the actual practice of using districtwide or schoolwide tests. But again, Mississippi is showing that tests are being worked on in the secondary schools almost as frequently as in the elementary schools.

One disappointing aspect of the principals' report is that fewer principals have access to districtwide or schoolwide tests than have districtwide or schoolwide objectives. The State hopes to close that gap rapidly in the next year or two as implementation of Mississippi's Program of Instructional

Management advances. The State believes that there should be no discrepancy left between principals having districtwide or schoolwide objectives and principals consistently using districtwide or schoolwide tests to measure student learning of those objectives. The State will continue to push hard to see that such tests are both developed and actually used in the schools as soon as possible. In addition, the State will begin to examine the quality of the districtwide and schoolwide tests now available. (The use of districtwide and schoolwide tests is discussed further in various later sections of this report.)

TOPIC 2: MONITORING OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

Principals were asked to report on their practices in three areas of monitoring the teaching and learning in their schools: (1) evaluating teaching; (2) supervising teaching (for the purpose of the principals' responses in the questionnaire, "supervision" was defined as the "over-the-shoulder guidance of teachers to prevent mistakes" and, therefore, was distinguished from "evaluation"); and (3) checking evidence of learning. Here is their report.

Evaluating Teaching

Soon the State will be adopting a uniform system for the evaluation of provisional teachers so that districts will be using one approach to personnel evaluation of those beginning teachers. This system, adapted from Georgia's system, is based on competencies identified as critical to successful teaching (and similarly to successful administration). It is important to keep in mind that this upcoming uniform system may well be adopted for use by districts in evaluating their personnel beyond the provisional period. The State would encourage such adoption, if the school district does not already have a comparable system in place.

Use of Printed Forms. Many educators believe it is important for principals and other evaluators of teachers to use printed forms to guide conferences held with teachers before the evaluation visit, to guide the evaluation

visit itself, to guide any conferences held with teachers following the visit when teachers' strengths and weaknesses are discussed, and to serve as a concrete, lasting record of what was observed during the classroom visit. In light of these beliefs, the upcoming uniform system for provisional personnel evaluation will use printed forms.

In Mississippi, about 50 percent of the 700 respondents said that they always used printed forms to record their impressions as they evaluated teachers during classroom visits. Another 40 percent of the respondents said that they sometimes used printed forms, and the remaining 10 percent said that they never used printed forms.

Thus, about one-half of the principals are following what the State considers to be the desired practice of using a printed form to guide the evaluation visit as well as to record their impressions of the visit. Obviously, that 50 percent will serve as a clear baseline, which the State will look hard to raise in the near future to the 100 percent the State believes it should be.

In the near future, the State will also look carefully at the actual printed forms being used in order to judge the quality of those forms. In other words, the State will not settle simply for principals' using printed forms, but wants to ensure that those forms are of high quality. Furthermore, the State will review the actual results of principals' using their forms to ensure that principals differentiate their ratings of teachers. In other words, the State will not settle simply for principals' using printed forms of high quality, but wants to ensure that principals do not give undifferentiated top ratings to all of their teachers.

Aspects of Teaching Observed. Principals were given a list of 18 aspects of teaching they might look for during evaluation visits and were asked which of the 18 they looked for as well as which two of the 18 were most important. Here are the 18 aspects listed in rank order according to the percent of principals who said each aspect was one of the two most important:

Aspect	Percent of Principals Naming Each Aspect as One of Two Most Important
1. How well organized the teacher is	45%
2. Whether the students seem motivated to learn	25
3. What objective the teacher is teaching	20
4. What teaching and evaluation methods the teacher is using	15
5. How much time the teacher spends on instructional vs. non-instructional activities	15
6. How much time the students spend on instructional vs. non-instructional activities	15
7. How many students in the class are actively involved	15
8. How enthusiastic the teacher is	15
9. Whether the students know the objective of the lesson	10
10. How often the teacher asks questions requiring students to use higher order thinking skills	5
11. What teaching materials the teacher is using	1
12. How well prepared the students are for class (e.g., have done their homework, etc.)	1
13. How quiet the students are	0
14. How well the students get along with each other	0
15. Whether the students ask permission before speaking	0

Aspect	Percent of Principals Naming Each Aspect as One of Two Most Important
16. How much the students like the teacher	0%
17. How attractive the teacher has made the classroom	0
18. How well groomed the teacher is	0

In general, the principals are looking for the most important aspects of teaching behavior, according both to the teacher competencies for beginning teachers slated for use statewide and to numerous other experts, although the rank order of the top eight aspects is arguable, even among the most experienced and sophisticated researchers. Thankfully, the State is pleased to see that the top eight aspects do reflect much of the latest research on effective teaching; an orderly, enthusiastic teacher, clearheaded about the objective of the lesson; motivated students; time spent on task; and attention to student evaluation.

Interestingly, the highest-ranked objective--how well organized the teacher is--probably reflects the principals' interest in the social organization and control of the class more than in the intellectual organization of the teacher. Perhaps, in time, the unusually high percentage of principals who chose it as most important may come to reflect intellectual organization--critical to successful teaching--more than social organization.

The ninth-ranked and tenth-ranked aspects are also clearly important in the teaching and learning process, and the State will try to increase principals' attention to those in their evaluation visits in the near future: whether students know the objective of the lesson and how often the teacher asks questions requiring the students to use higher order thinking skills.

In addition to choosing the two most important aspects of teaching they looked for, principals were also asked to check all of the aspects of teaching they looked for during evaluation visits. Here are the 18 aspects again, but this time listed in rank order according to the percent of principals who said that they looked for each one:

Aspect	Percent of Principals Looking for Each Aspect	Rank Order From Previous "Most Important" Table
1. How well organized the teacher is	95%	1
2. Whether the students seem motivated to learn	90	2
3. What objective the teacher is teaching	90	3
4. What teaching and evaluation methods the teacher is using	90	4
5. How many students in the class are actively involved	90	7
6. How enthusiastic the teacher is	90	8
7. How often the teacher asks questions requiring students to use higher order thinking skills	90	10
8. What teaching materials the teacher is using	90	11
9. How much time the teacher spends on instructional vs. non-instructional activities	85	5
10. How much time the students spend on instructional vs. non-instructional activities	80	6
11. Whether the students know the objective of the lesson	75	9
12. How attractive the teacher has made the classroom	75	17
13. How well prepared the students are for class (e.g., have done their homework, etc.)	70	12
14. How well groomed the teacher is	50	18
15. How quiet the students are	40	13
16. Whether the students ask permission before speaking	35	14
17. How well the students get along with each other	30	15
18. How much the students like the teacher	25	16

Based on this table, it is evident that a relatively high percentage of principals noted that, in addition to the two aspects they considered most important, they also looked for many of the lower-ranked aspects during evaluation visits. In other words, many principals are looking for every possible aspect of teaching, somewhat indiscriminately. For example:

- About 25 percent of the principals looked for how much the students liked the teacher.
- About 30 percent of the principals looked for how well the students got along with each other.
- About 35 percent of the principals looked for whether students asked permission before speaking.
- About 40 percent of the principals looked for how quiet the students were.
- About 50 percent of the principals looked for how well groomed the teacher was.
- About 75 percent of the principals looked for how attractive the teacher had made the classroom.

Inasmuch as the State considers these aspects of teaching to be relatively less important--even as the principals do, according to their own ranked list--the State will begin to counsel principals not to waste precious classroom visiting time observing these relatively less important aspects. Given the fact that so little time is spent each year in classroom evaluation visits, the State believes it is important to direct principals to spend all of that time observing only the highest-ranking aspects of teaching. Furthermore, the State will also examine the printed forms principals use in evaluation visits to see whether all 18 of those aspects are included. If all 18 aspects are included, which they probably should not be, the State believes that the aspects should be weighted according to their importance. That examination will be part of the State's examination of the quality of those printed forms.

Frequency and Length of Evaluation Visits. The typical principal responded that he or she was the only person who evaluated teachers during the year through classroom visits in the typical school in Mississippi. (About 60 percent of the principals said that they were the only evaluator; most of the remaining 40 percent of the principals said that someone else evaluated teachers one or two times per year). The number of times per year that the typical principal visited various teachers in his or her school were reported as follows:

Teacher's Background	Times Visited
First year in the profession	3
First year in that school	3
Second or third year in that school	2
Fourth year or more in that school	2

Before making a judgment about whether that amount of classroom visitation is adequate for evaluating teachers, it is necessary to study the number of minutes the typical principal reported as the length of each evaluation visit:

Teacher's Background	Minutes Visited
First year in the profession	30
First year in that school	30
Second or third year in that school	25
Fourth year or more in that school	25

Again, before making a judgment about this amount of evaluation of teachers, it is important to remember that these data are for the typical (or median) principal. That means that about one-half of the principals are in

classrooms less frequently and for a shorter amount of time than these previous two tables show.

These responses raise several concerns for the State. First, should the principal be the only person making classroom visits to evaluate teachers in many schools? Or, should the State--and the school districts, of course--be getting some mileage out of assistant principals and district-level central office personnel? The State firmly endorses the idea that principals should not be the only people making classroom evaluation visits in a school or school district. Rather, a number of trained people will be making evaluation visits under the upcoming uniform personnel evaluation system for provisional teachers: one principal, one peer, and one external evaluator. The State will encourage schools and school districts to use at least additional administrators--beyond the principal--for making evaluation visits so long as they are well trained in what to look for.

Next, should teachers new to the profession be visited in the classroom for evaluation purposes more than 90 minutes per year inasmuch as they are doing something they have never really done before? And, should teachers new to the school (even if they have been teaching as long as 15 years) be getting the same 90 minutes of evaluation visiting time that teachers new to the profession are getting? And finally, should teachers who have been teaching two years of more (right up through even 30 years) be getting just 50 minutes of evaluation visiting time each year? The State strongly believes that these figures are too low and that more time must be given to conducting sound, valuable evaluation visits if the quality of teaching is to improve in Mississippi. The total evaluation visiting time will certainly be greater than

than these figures under the upcoming uniform personnel evaluation system for provisional teachers.

The State will undertake an immediate study designed to result in a recommended number of evaluation visits as well as a minimum number of minutes per visit. That recommendation could well be on the order of at least doubling the current time spent in evaluation visits to each teacher's classroom.

Involvement of Teachers Before and After Evaluation Visits. Many educators believe that it is important to hold a conference with a teacher before the actual evaluation visit to the classroom. In Mississippi, only about 20 percent of the principals said that they always conducted conferences before evaluation visits to teachers. Another 65 percent of the principals said that sometimes conducted such pre-evaluation conferences, and another 15 percent of the principals said that they never conducted such pre-evaluation conferences.

Inasmuch as the State believes that such prior conferences are helpful in letting the teachers know what standards will be used to judge their performances and in dispelling any anxiety the teachers have about the evaluation visits, the State will definitely encourage principals to conduct conferences far more often. There is considerable room for improvement in principals' practices in this area.

Virtually all educators believe that it is critical for principals to hold a conference with teachers after evaluation visits to the classroom to

discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the teaching that was actually observed and to discuss specific ways that teachers can improve on any weaknesses. About 75 percent of the principals said that they always conducted such post-evaluation conferences. Almost all of the remaining 25 percent of the principals said that they sometimes conducted such post-evaluation conferences.

The State is pleased with this early baseline of 75 percent. However, if the remaining one-quarter of the principals are not yet discussing with teachers what they could do to improve their teaching, based on the evaluation visit, the State feels it is losing a lot of power available to improve teaching. In other words, the principals are not getting the full advantage out of the time they are spending in classroom visits, if they do not deal one-to-one with teachers about what they observed. The State will endeavor to raise this baseline from 75 percent to 100 percent of the principals conducting post-evaluation conferences with teachers.

While the vast majority of principals (about 90 percent) said that the teacher received some kind of written or oral report of the evaluation visits the principals made, it is interesting that only about 60 percent of principals reported that they gave such reports to any district-level personnel and only about 15 percent gave such reports to any other building administrators (such as assistant principals). Again, the State believes it is losing some power to improve teaching if most other available supervisors in the schools, such as assistant principals, do not have information to help teachers improve their teaching. In addition, if not many more than one-half of the principals report such information to any district-level personnel, the State and the

school districts themselves cannot get any improvement power from district-level experts or specialists who might also be in a position to help teachers improve their teaching. The State will urge principals to report the results of evaluation visits both to appropriate district-level personnel and to appropriate building administrators, such as assistant principals.

Supervising Teaching

The questionnaire to principals attempted to distinguish evaluation visits (made in order to get concrete evidence with which to judge teachers' performances in a formal way) from supervisory visits (made to guide teachers in a more informal way in order to prevent mistakes in their teaching behaviors). The evaluation visits, of course, carry the weight of formal assessments of teachers' performances which could be used, if necessary, to prove that a given teacher was not doing a competent job in the classroom. The evaluation visits are more likely to be required by school districts and are more likely to be regulated by teacher agreements and contracts.

Judging by principals' responses, there is no real differentiation at all between formal evaluation and informal supervision in Mississippi. For example, given the same list of 18 aspects of teaching behavior and asked what they look for during supervisory visits to the classroom, principals ranked the 18 aspects in the same order as they did for the evaluation visits--and with almost identical percentages. In other words, what principals look for during formal evaluation visits and informal supervisory visits are exactly the same things.

In terms of frequency and length of supervisory visits, the typical (or median) principal responded that he or she made one supervisory visit (in addition to the prescribed evaluation visits) to teachers in their first, second, or third years of teaching and no extra supervisory visits to teachers in their fourth year or more of teaching. The supervisory visits by the typical principal ran 10 to 15 minutes longer than the evaluation visits. And, as with the evaluation visits, no supervisor other than the principal himself or herself conducted any of these visits with teachers in the classroom.

Obviously, inasmuch as the State is serious about having classroom teachers well supervised in hopes of improving teacher performance and student learning, there is considerable room for improvement in terms of who conducts supervisory visits, how many are conducted each year per teacher, and how long each lasts. In addition to increasing the number and length of supervisory visits, a variety of other school personnel could--and should--be used as supervisors, especially trained department or grade chairpersons. The State will raise its expectations for supervisory visits simultaneously with raising its expectations for evaluation visits, as described earlier.

Finally, principals were asked whether they held conferences after supervisory visits with teachers. About 40 percent of the principals responded that they always held such post-supervision conferences. Virtually all of the remaining 60 percent of the principals said that they sometimes held such post-supervision conferences. When those responses are compared to the number of principals who held post-evaluation conferences with teachers, it is evident that principals are doing a better job of debriefing with teachers after formal evaluation visits than after informal supervisory visits.

That means, of course, that the State--and the school districts themselves--could get more value out of supervisory visits if principals were required to discuss their observations with teachers after the visits. If those debriefings are not occurring, there could be little value at all to the supervisory visits. The State will strongly encourage principals to conduct these post-supervision conferences as another step toward improving classroom teaching and student learning.

Finally, the State will work diligently to define and differentiate for principals the concepts of evaluation and supervision, along with the strengths of each. The State will make it clear that both methods of monitoring teaching are critical to the success of any school or school administrator.

Checking Evidence of Learning

Grade Distributions of Report Card Grades. The typical principal in Mississippi manages a school in which report cards are distributed to students four times per year. The typical (or median) principal responded that he or she checked grade distributions of report card grades every time report cards were distributed--that is, for each of the four marking periods. The State is pleased with those good results. The results mean that the typical principal keeps tabs on the grades which teachers give students and, thus, has the information necessary to spot grading problems (e.g., a teacher who gives all A's, a teacher who gives all D's, etc.).

However, it is also important to note that about 25 percent of the principals were not typical and thus reported that they did not check grade

distributions for each marking period. Therefore, there is still room for improvement across Mississippi for one-quarter of the principals to make better use of and get more valuable information from standard report card grades. The State will strongly encourage principals to carry out the simple practice of reviewing report card grade distributions for each marking period. The State will also follow up to see what exactly principals look for in checking grade distributions and to ensure that they know how to look for the most important patterns, trends, and problems.

Mastery of Student Learning Objectives. The typical principal responded that he or she checked how many scheduled student learning objectives were mastered by students in each grade or each course in a typical individual classroom or section four times per year. Given other responses made by principals throughout the questionnaire, it seems highly unlikely that the typical principal checked mastery of student learning objectives as frequently as he or she checked grade distributions of report card grades. It is possible that principals simply took credit for checking mastery of individual student learning objectives every time they checked distributions of report card grades.

Thus, the State believes that it does not yet have reliable information on how frequently principals pay attention to students' mastery of actual learning objectives. Of course, that information is crucial in that it tells principals far more reliably about actual student learning than report card grades do. The State will work hard to get more accurate data on this important principal practice as soon as possible.

Actual Student Work. The typical principal also responded that he or shechecked actual student work--essays, drawings, lab notebooks, rope climbing, bookends, etc.--and judged it against some standard of acceptable work fourtimes per year in the typical individual classroom or section. That means that about one-half of the principals reported that they checked actual student work fewer than four times per year.

It seems probable that the typical principal in Mississippi does not, in fact, see actual student work and judge it against some standard for acceptable work four times per year per typical individual classroom or section--especially given that the evaluation and supervisory visits, which frequently are the reasons principals go into the classroom, are relatively rare during the year. It is hard to imagine that teachers give principals samples of actual student work to review in the principals' offices. Therefore, in most schools in Mississippi, it is likely that no one is looking at and judging actual student work, except for the individual classroom teacher. Therefore, the State will encourage principals to begin to look at and judge actual student work.

Available Test Scores. Principals were also asked what test scores were available for them to check during the year, and they responded as follows:

Type of Test	Percent of Principals with Scores Available
• Teacher-made tests	90%
• Nationally standardized tests	85
• Other commercial tests, such as those that match textbooks	60
• Locally developed districtwide tests	35
• Schoolwide tests	30

These results show that, for any typical individual classroom or section, a principal is most able to look at classroom or section scores for teacher-made tests or nationally standardized tests. A slight majority of the principals are able to look at scores on other commercial tests (most likely those which accompany basal reading series in the elementary grades).

Finally, if the districtwide and schoolwide test score availabilities are combined, about 65 percent of the principals have scores from locally developed districtwide or schoolwide tests--presumably designed to match districtwide or schoolwide objectives--which would give good evidence across teachers of one subject or one grade and would let principals judge student learning against some common local standard. (Perhaps the percentage should not be so high as 65, given that some principals may have both available.) Interestingly, about 55 to 65 percent of principals reported earlier in the questionnaire that they had access to districtwide or schoolwide tests.

Again, these percentages are undoubtedly higher than reflect actual practice. Perhaps some principals were responding that some districtwide or schoolwide tests were available, rather than actual test scores. The State believes that there is still substantial room for improvement in this baseline, and the State will make this a high priority arena of improvement, given its commitment to Instructional Management.

TOPIC 3: DECISIONS ABOUT STUDENT PROMOTION

Principals were asked to report on their practices in two areas of student promotion: (1) local standards for promotion; and (2) the results of local standards for promotion. Here is their report.

Local Standards for Promotion

Local Written Standards. Most professional educators and laypersons believe that it is only fair for school districts to have local written standards to govern student promotion from grade to grade so that both students and their parents will know what is expected from students year by year. About 80 percent of the 700 principals who responded indicated that they did have local written standards governing student promotion from grade to grade in their schools. Of those 80 percent, about 90 percent indicated that the Board of Education issued local written standards, 45 percent indicated that the Superintendent also issued such standards, and 35 percent indicated that the principal himself or herself also issued such standards (obviously, in some school districts, local written standards are issued at both district and school levels).

The State is pleased that 80 percent of the principals in Mississippi can promote students based on local written standards, which can be publicized to students and their parents. However, the State believes all principals should be able to stand on the foundation of local written promotion standards

in making judgments about each student and, therefore, will work to ensure that 100 percent of the principals in Mississippi will have such standards in the future.

Furthermore, the State will undertake a study of those local written standards to determine their quality, especially their clarity and rigor. The State believes it must ensure not only that local written standards exist, but also that they are of high quality.

Interestingly, only about 25 percent of the principals said that they had local written restrictions on the number of times a student could be retained per grade or in total. Where such restrictions existed, about 85 percent of them were issued by the Board of Education, 45 percent also by the Superintendent, and 25 percent also by the principal himself or herself (again, local written restrictions evidently are issued at both district and school levels).

Ideally, if student promotion is to be based solely on acceptable student achievement of specific student learning objectives, such local written restrictions should not exist in Mississippi. In other words, students should be retained until they master the student learning objectives they need in order to go on and learn the next year's work.

Therefore, the State is pleased that local written restrictions exist in only one-quarter of Mississippi schools. The State will continue to urge principals and Superintendents to base promotion on achievement and, thus, to get rid of any existing local written restrictions on the number of retentions allowed per student. But furthermore, the State will concurrently continue to

urge principals and Superintendents to have some kind of special, additional help available for students who have been retained. They must not be allowed simply to repeat a course of study that did not work for them the first time. Finally, the State will insist that any course or grade which a significant number of students fail must be examined thoroughly and improved before additional students are assigned to it.

Factors Determining Report Card Grades and Awarding of Carnegie Units. Principals were asked to rank nine factors in order of their importance to teachers in determining students' report card grades or, in high school, teachers' awarding of Carnegie units to students. Here are the rank orders of the factors:

Primary Grades	Intermediate Grades	Secondary Grades
Assigned work	Assigned work/teacher-made tests	Teacher-made tests
Teacher-made tests		Assigned work
Class participation	Districtwide tests	Homework
Districtwide tests	Class participation/homework	Class participation
Homework		Schoolwide tests
Schoolwide tests	Schoolwide tests	Districtwide tests
Attitude/class behavior	Attitude/class behavior	Attitude
		Class behavior
National tests	National tests	National tests

There are a number of similarities and some differences in the rank order of factors, depending on the grade level of the students. The main similarities are that students' performances on assigned work and their scores on teacher-made tests are the two most important factors by far in the rank ordering; performances on assigned work are somewhat more important in the earlier grades, and scores on teacher-made tests are somewhat more important in the later grades. Students' attitudes, their behavior in class, and their scores on nationally standardized tests are quite unimportant, regardless of the students' grade in

in school. But here are the differences. Students' homework becomes more important as students get older. Students' scores on locally developed districtwide tests become far less important as students get older.

While the State understands that high schools do not prefer to give standard districtwide or schoolwide tests, the State believes that consistency of teaching and learning across a school or school district is desirable. Therefore, the State will continue to push for districtwide or schoolwide tests in the high school subjects and will urge those scores to be considered in figuring students' grades and in the awarding of Carnegie units. (The actual weight such scores should be given in figuring grades must depend, of course, on the management style of each individual school or school district. An extreme position of a districtwide test's counting for 80 percent of the student's grade can be just as inappropriate as an extreme position of a districtwide test's counting for none of the student's grade.)

Otherwise, the State is pleased that students' grades and the awarding of Carnegie units seem to be based on student performances on assigned work and test scores more than on students' attitudes and class behavior. That emphasis onstudent achievement is certainly consistent with Mississippi's program of Instructional Management.

Factors Determining Student Promotion. Principals were asked to rank seven factors in order of their importance in determining whether students were promoted from grade to grade in their schools. Here are the results:

Elementary Grades	Secondary Grades
Grades	Grades/Carnegie units
Districtwide tests	Attendance
Previous retentions	Schoolwide tests
Schoolwide tests	Previous retentions
Attendance	Districtwide tests
Age	Age
National tests	National tests

In general, the results are quite similar. Students' grades and/or their accumulation of Carnegie units are the most important single factor principals use in deciding whether to promote students from grade to grade. Equally clearly, students' scores on nationally standardized tests are the least important factor in determining student promotion from grade to grade. (The data underlying these tables show that these two factors are very far apart.) There are also differences between elementary and secondary schools. Students' scores on locally developed districtwide tests are a more important factor in determining student promotion in the elementary grades, while attendance is a more important factor in determining student promotion in the secondary grades. (Again, as seen with previous responses, it is possible that the districtwide tests, especially in the secondary grades, have not yet been used long enough or consistently enough to generate sufficient scores to be reviewed in determining student promotion.)

The State is pleased that principals seem to be making an effort to promote students based on their achievement as evidenced by their grades or an accumulation of Carnegie units. The State is especially pleased that the elementary grades give some credence to districtwide test results (whatever may be available at this time) and will urge the high schools to give more weight to districtwide test results (as they become more available), as mentioned earlier. The State believes each school or school district must

determine how quickly it can mount a districtwide or schoolwide testing program and produce usable results of student learning to use in governing promotion. Eventually, of course, the State will want all objectives to be measured by districtwide or schoolwide tests and will want those results used to improve teaching.

In addition, the State understands that attendance would reasonably be a more important factor in determining promotion in the secondary grades--where students are more likely to be truant--and believes that this emphasis on attendance in the secondary grades does help keep students in school where they can learn. The State is also reassured and pleased that principals do not consider the age of the student to be an important factor in promotion inasmuch as that is the factor most closely associated with social promotion, a practice which the State does not endorse.

Results of Local Standards for Promotion

Actual Retentions. According to the principals, here are the percentages of regular students (not including special education students) they retained in their grade at the end of the 1982-83 school year:

Grade	Percent of Students Retained
1	16%
2	8
3	7
4	7
5	9
6	8
7	14
8	11
9	12
10	11
11	9
12	7

It is not surprising that the most retentions occur in grade 1, given that all students do not attend kindergarten and thus many are unprepared to deal with first grade work in a school environment.

The most retentions in later grades occur in grades 7 through 10, perhaps for a variety of reasons. First, social promotion may have been used to a greater degree in the elementary grades, and that policy catches up with certain students when they get to seventh grade, often in a new school where teachers do not know them and must rely more on what students can show they know. Second, secondary teachers have responsibility for more students and thus cannot pay as much attention to each student; therefore, each student passes or fails more on his or her proved merit. Third, departmentalization often begins in the seventh grade; consequently, teachers of academic subjects in the secondary grades begin to pay more attention to achievement within each separate academic subject and pay less attention to the overall achievement of the student.

Students Reading Below Grade Level. Principals were also asked to approximate the percentages of their regular students (not counting special education students) who were currently reading "below grade level"--that is, scoring below the 40th percentile on their total reading score on whatever nationally standardized tests were used in that school. (The State reasoned that the percentages of students reading below grade level would be one approximation of the number of students who perhaps should have been retained in a previous grade. If students could not read at their grade level, the State reasoned that they would probably have trouble doing other subject matter work at that grade level because they lacked the reading skills necessary to read the social studies textbooks, science textbooks, and so on.)

Here are the results:

Grade	Percent of Students Reading Below Grade Level
2	30%
3	35
4	35
5	35
6	35
7	40
8	40
9	40
10	45
11	45
12	45

The State believes that these percentages call into question principals' current promotion practices. While local written standards may well be in place (as principals reported), they may not be clear enough for principals to follow or may not be demanding enough concerning student achievement, as mentioned earlier. While principals may well know the rank ordering of factors they should use in determining students' grades or in determining student promotion (as principals reported), principals may not be following either their local written standards or their own best judgments of the rank ordering of grading and promotion factors. For example, these retention rates probably do not reflect elementary school principals' ranking of districtwide test scores (wherever they are available) as the second most important factor in determining student promotion.

It is impossible to tell at this time why more students are not being retained if, in fact, they cannot read on grade level--and why the educational programs are not doing a better job of producing students who do read on grade level. Of course, reading is not the only skill students need to succeed in a grade, but it is difficult to believe that the discrepancy between the

percentages of students who are retained and the percentages of students who cannot read on grade level can be justified by common sense. The State is going to investigate this discrepancy further and will determine why principals do not appear to be following in practice what the State presumes to be the local written district or school policies on student promotion and the principals' own best judgments.

Satisfaction with Promotion Practices. Principals were asked to rate the satisfaction that the principals themselves, the teachers in their schools, and the parents of their students felt about their schools' current promotion practices. Principals could give any rating for each of the three populations from 0 (not at all satisfied) to 10 (extremely satisfied). The median ratings are as follows:

Population	Median Rating
Principal	8
Teachers	8
Parents	7

The State is extremely concerned about the relatively high level of satisfaction with current promotion practices when so many students who cannot read on grade level are being promoted anyway. Perhaps the ratings reflect satisfaction with local written promotion policies as opposed to local actual promotion practices, but that is doubtful. It is more likely that the State needs to engage in active re-education of its principals, teachers, and even parents to make it well understood that students should not be promoted if they cannot do the work required of them at the next grade. Further, the State needs to make it clear that educational programs which are repeatedly unsuccessful in producing student learning in any subject and in any grade must be improved before additional students are subjected to them, as mentioned earlier.

Principals, teachers, and parents must not tolerate any unsuccessful program in any subject or in any grade.

As Mississippi's program of Instructional Management continues to be implemented--as more districtwide or schoolwide student learning objectives are created and used and tested by districtwide or schoolwide tests--the State is hopeful that promotion based on student achievement will become a reality in practice rather than just a goal on paper.

STATE CORRECTIVE ACTIONS

This is a summary of the various corrective actions the State will be taking based on this first quantitative study of "Mastery of Subject Matter and Learning Skills." Because the first study was simply a quantitative report of school or school district policies and practices, a number of these corrective actions now involve the State's collection of qualitative data. In other words, now that the State knows certain policies and practices are in place, the State will begin to examine the quality of those policies and practices. Here is the summary (the page number in parentheses following each State action refers to the page of this report on which that State action is described):

State Corrective Action

1. Continue to push for the creation and serious implementation of districtwide or schoolwide objectives in every subject and in every grade (p. 11)

2. Continue to examine the quality of the districtwide and schoolwide objectives now available (p.11)

3. Continue to push for subject-to-subject and grade-to-grade linkages of objectives (p.12)

4. Examine the quality and extent of subject-to-subject and grade-to-grade linkages of objectives (p. 12)

5. Continue to push for the development and use of districtwide or schoolwide tests matched to districtwide or schoolwide objectives (p. 15)

6. Examine the quality of the districtwide and and schoolwide tests available (p. 15)

7. Work hard to ensure that all principals use printed forms in conducting teacher evaluation classroom visits (p. 17)

8. Examine the quality, especially the content, of the printed forms being used to conduct teacher evaluation classroom visits (pp. 17 and 21)

State Corrective Action

9. Review the actual results of principals' use of teacher evaluation printed forms to ensure that principals differentiate their ratings of teachers (p. 17)

10. Counsel principals to look for only the most important 10 or so aspects of teaching behavior during teacher evaluation classroom visits (p. 21)

11. Encourage schools and school districts to use at least additional trained administrators--beyond the principal--for making teacher evaluation classroom visits (p. 23)

12. Undertake an immediate study resulting in a recommended minimum number of teacher evaluation classroom visits as well as a minimum number of minutes per visit (p. 24)

13. Encourage principals to conduct conferences with teachers before evaluation classroom visits (p. 24)

14. Work hard to ensure that all principals conduct conferences with teachers after evaluation classroom visits (p. 25)

15. Encourage principals to report the results of teacher evaluation classroom visits both to appropriate district-level personnel and to appropriate building administrators, such as assistant principals (p. 26)

16. Raise State expectations for the frequency, length, and content of supervisory classroom visits (p. 27)

17. Encourage principals to conduct conferences with teachers after supervisory classroom visits (p. 28)

18. Define and differentiate for principals the concepts of <u>evaluation</u> and <u>supervision</u> and make it clear that both methods should be used (p. 28)

19. Encourage principals to review report card distributions for each marking period (p. 29)

State Corrective Action

20. Follow up to see what exactly principals look for in checking report card grade distributions and ensure that they know how to look for the right things (p. 29)

21. Compile accurate data on how frequently principals check how many scheduled student learning objectives have been mastered in each grade or course (p. 29)

22. Encourage principals to look at and judge (against some standard for acceptable work) actual student work (e.g., essays, drawings, lab notebooks, rope climbing, bookends, etc.) (p. 30)

23. Encourage principals to review available test scores--especially those on districtwide or schoolwide tests matched to districtwide or schoolwide objectives--as a measure of student learning (p. 31)

24. Work to ensure that local written student promotion standards are available to all principals to follow (pp. 32-33)

25. Undertake a study of local written student promotion standards to determine their quality, especially their clarity and rigor (p. 33)

26. Continue to urge principals and Superintendents to base student promotion on achievement and, thus, to get rid of any existing local written restrictions on the number of retentions allowed per student (p. 33)

27. Continue to urge principals and Superintendents to have special, additional help available for retained students (pp. 33-34)

28. Insist that any course or grade which a significant number of students fail must be examined and improved before more students are assigned to it (p. 34)

29. Continue to push for districtwide or schoolwide tests in the high school subjects and urge those scores to be considered more heavily in figuring students' grades and accumulation of Carnegie units (p. 35)

State Corrective Action

30. Urge each school or school district to schedule at a reasonable pace the full implementation of a districtwide or schoolwide testing program to produce usable results of student learning on all objectives to govern student promotion (pp. 36-37)

31. Investigate the discrepancy between the numbers of students not reading on grade level and the numbers of students retained (p. 40)

32. Engage in active re-education of principals, teachers, and parents to make it clear that students should not be promoted if they cannot do the required work and that unsuccessful programs in any subject or in any grade must not be tolerated (p. 40)

STATE EXPECTATIONS OF PRINCIPALS' BEHAVIOR

Here is a list of what the State believes a good principal in Mississippi does:

1. Establishes high quality districtwide or schoolwide objectives in every subject and in every grade and sees that they are used by teachers to govern their teaching

2. Makes effective, high quality linkages among objectives from subject to subject as well as from grade to grade

3. Manages the creation of high quality districtwide or schoolwide tests and sees that they are used by teachers to measure student learning of the objectives

4. Uses high quality printed forms in teacher evaluation classroom visits to guide pre-evaluation conferences with teachers, to guide the evaluation visit itself, to guide post-evaluation conferences with teachers, and to serve as a lasting record of the evaluation visit

5. Does not give all teachers the same ratings on printed forms used in teacher evaluation classroom visits

6. Looks for only the most important aspects of teaching during teacher evaluation classroom visits, namely:

    - How well organized the teacher is
    - Whether the students seem motivated to learn
    - What objective the teacher is teaching
    - What teaching and evaluation methods the teacher is using
    - How much time the teacher spends on instructional vs. non-instructional activities
    - How much time the students spend on instructional vs. non-instructional activities
    - How many students in the class are actively involved
    - How enthusiastic the teacher is
    - Whether the students know the objective of the lesson
    - How often the teacher asks questions requiring students to use higher order thinking skills

7. Uses other trained administrators to conduct teacher evaluation classroom visits and confers with them about the results

8. Spends more time in teacher evaluation classroom visits for teachers new to the profession and for teachers new to the school than for experienced teachers in the school

9. Spends considerably more than 90 minutes per year in teacher evaluation classroom visits for teachers new to the profession and teachers new to the school

10. Spends considerably more than 60 minutes in teacher evaluation classroom visits for experienced teachers in the school

11. Holds conferences with teachers before teacher evaluation classroom visits

12. Holds conferences with teachers after teacher evaluation classroom visits to discuss their strengths and weaknesses and to discuss specific ways to improve their weaknesses

13. Reports the results of teacher evaluation classroom visits to appropriate district-level personnel and appropriate building administrators, such as assistant principals

14. Understands the difference between <u>evaluation</u> and <u>supervision</u>

15. Spends far more time supervising teachers than evaluating them

16. Holds conferences with teachers after supervisory visits to discuss strengths and weaknesses and specific ways to improve weaknesses

17. Checks grade distributions of report card grades every time report cards are handed out and knows what to look for when checking them

18. Checks mastery of student learning objectives in each grade or course frequently

19. Looks at and judges actual student work (essays, drawings, lab notebooks, rope climbing, bookends, etc.) against his or her own standard of acceptable student work

20. Reviews available student test scores--especially on districtwide or schoolwide tests--and uses this measure of student learning to improve instruction

21. Advocates clear and rigorous student promotion standards in written school district policy

22. Follows student promotion standards in written school district policy

23. Bases student promotion on achievement and does not restrict the number of times a student may be retained

24. Provides special additional help for all students who have been retained inasmuch as that treatment did not work for them the first time

25. Investigates and improves any grade or courses which a significant number of students failed before assigning any more students to that grade or course

26. Counts districtwide or schoolwide test scores of students in figuring their grades and their accumulation of Carnegie units

27. Counts districtwide or schoolwide test scores of students in making promotion decisions about them

28. Encourages teachers and parents of students in the school not to tolerate social promotion and not to be satisfied with the educational program in any course or grade which is not producing students who have learned the objectives